

A NOTE ON THE ANCIENT INDIAN OATH (2)

Use of the Periphrastic Future *

It is remarked by A. Holzmänn¹, V. S. Sukthankar² and others³ that the two forms of future in Sanskrit, namely the simple future (-*syā-*) and the periphrastic future (-*tr-*), are used in the Mahābhārata and in classical Sanskrit literature without significant difference. Both appear alternatively, sometimes for metrical and sometimes for stylistic reasons⁴. The following two examples may suffice to illustrate the situation.

*ahaṃ duryodhanaṃ hantā karnaṃ hantā dhananjayaḥ
śakuniṃ cākṣa-kitavaṃ sahademo haniṣyati (MBh.2.68.26)
antaṃ adya kariṣyāmi tasya duḥkhasya pārṣata
hantā vāsmi raṇe karnaṃ sa vā māṃ nihaniṣyati
(MBh.8.34.8ad)*

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1. HOLZMANN (1884), p. 35 § 949 (« Beiden Futura stehen im Mahābhārata häufig neben einander, ohne dass irgend ein Unterschied der Bedeutung sich aufstellen liesse »).

2. SUKTHANKAR (1933) p. LXXVII («... One of the variants may be a trifle more suitable than the other; for instance, in the discrimination between the simple and the periphrastic future, or the *parasmaipada* and the *ātmanepada* »).

3. Cf. SPEIJER 1886, p. 260 § 341 and (1896), p. 55 § 184.

4. Cf. HOLZMANN (1884), p. 35 and (1894), pp. 83-87.

Yet, those who have made a study of the Epic oath-passages may have an impression that these passages are characterized by the construction of the periphrastic future. This is especially the case with the revenge-oath, where the Epic hero swears to visit revenge upon a particular person while setting a certain limit of time.

However, this comparatively frequent occurrence of the periphrastic future in the oath-passages is understandable when we make a brief survey of the syntactical features of this category of future, which have been investigated by the scholars of eminence in the past. B. Delbrück's remarks on the periphrastic future have often been noted: « es wird gebraucht, wenn man sagen will, dass etwas in einem bestimmten Zeitpunkt der Zukunft eintreten wird ⁵ », and « das Futurum auf *-tār* auf den sicheren Eintritt eines Ereignisses in der Zukunft hinweist, und zwar ganz objectiv, ohne dass dabei eine Absicht oder Hoffnung des Subjectes hervorträte ⁶ ». J. S. Speijer also remarked: « (dass) dem *tr-* Futur der Begriff der Zuversichtlichkeit und objectiven Gewissheit innewohnt ⁷ ». As has been noted also by other scholars, it is *un futur de certitude* ⁸ and of *definiteness* ⁹, often accompanied by such temporal adverbs as denote a definite length of time as counted from the present, i.e., *prātaḥ* (in the morning, tomorrow morning), *śvaḥ* (tomorrow ¹⁰). It tends to appear in direct speech ¹¹, indicating *prédiction*, *menace* ¹², *promesse*, *serment*, and *malédiction* ¹³. The certain conviction on the part of the speaker naturally adds a nuance to this category of future of emphasis and emotion, which is also peculiar to the nominal sentence construction in the Sanskrit language (*dātā*, *hantā*, etc.) ¹⁴.

5. DELBRÜCK (1888), p. 295 § 168.

6. DELBRÜCK (1878), p. 8.

7. SPEIJER (1896), p. 55 § 184.

8. Cf. BENVENISTE (1948), p. 17 and RENOU (1938), pp. 111-112 and 128.

9. Cf. GONDA (1971), pp. 5-6.

10. Cf. DELBRÜCK (1878) p. 11 (« genaue Datierung ») and (1888) p. 295 § 168 and RENOU (1938) p. 127.

11. Cf. KÖLVER (1982), p. 144.

12. Cf. BENVENISTE (1948), p. 17 and RENOU (1938) p. 127.

13. Cf. RENOU (1962), p. 493 § 364.

14. Cf. GONDA (1957), pp. 163-166.

In the light of those characteristic features of periphrastic future¹⁵, that is, definiteness, certitude, emphasis, emotiveness and accompaniment of temporal adverbs (*prātaḥ*, *śvaḥ*), it might be an interesting task to examine its usages in the Epic oath-passages, because the concept of oath itself is imbued with certitude, conviction, and emphasis; and the revenge-oath carries particularly strong emotion¹⁶. Furthermore, the oath-passages are often characterized by temporal adverbs, because the action sworn by the Epic heroes is expected to be accomplished within certain limits of time (by tomorrow, before the sun-set, etc.).

Below are listed in alphabetical order the forms of periphrastic future as used in the oath-passages that I have been able to collect from the Mahābhārata. However, as will be revealed in the notes, counter-examples of the simple future (-*sya*-) are equally found in oath-passages¹⁷. The following discussion, then, does not exclude the possibility of the simple future. The result of our investigation, therefore, is not a conclusive one, but the

15. Cf. also THUMB-HAUSCHILD (1959), p. 329 (« zum Ausdruck einer beabsichtigten oder gewollten Handlung, eines Wunsches, der Möglichkeit, der Erwartung, Hoffnung, Befürchtung, Wahrscheinlichkeit, der Meinung des Sprechenden, des Befehls »).

As for other studies on the periphrastic future in the Indo-Aryan languages the followings are worthy of reference. E. H. JOHNSTON, *The Buddhacarita, or Act of the Buddha*, Part II, Lahore, 1936, p. 14 (note on I.64). F. EDGERTON, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar*, New Haven, 1953, p. 152 (31.36). J. BROCKINGTON, *The verbal system of the Rāmāyaṇa*, in JOIB, 19 (1969), pp. 13-15. R. TSUCHIDA, *On the usage of Hindi nomen agentis—vālā as periphrastic future*, in A. Hirakawa's Volume (in Japanese), Tokyo, 1985, pp. 611-626. O. von HINÜBER, *Das ältere Mittelindisch im Überblick*, Wien, 1986, p. 192 § 475.

16. Possibly, *hantāham arjunam* (MBh.8.34.26) should be construed: « I am the killer with respect to, or specifically of, Arjuna » (Accusative of respect, or of specification). Note the emphatic value attached to the nominal sentence (cf. BENVENISTE [1948], p. 17: *dātā asmi*, « je suis voué à donner, je suis-à-donner, je vais (ou dois) donner »).

17. For example, in a series of revenge-oaths taken by Aśvatthāman (MBh.10.3), all but two instances (*gantāsmi* [24] and *labdhāsmi* [28]) are in the simple future: *kariṣyāmi* (26), *sūdayiṣyāmi* (27,28), *cariṣyāmi* (29), *ardayiṣyāmi* (30), *bhaviṣyāmi* (31 and 35), *gamiṣyāmi* (32), *pramathiṣyāmi* (33,34). Also, in the well-known vows taken by Devavrata (Bhīṣma), we note the simple future in use (*evam etat kariṣyāmi yathā tvam anubhāṣe* [1.94.79], *adya-prabhṛti me dāśa brahmacaryaṃ bhaviṣyati* [1.94.88]).

present writer is content to show the state of affairs as objectively as possible ¹⁸.

1. *bhañktā-*

*pratijñā-pāraṇaṃ dharmāḥ kṣatriyasyeti vettha hi
suyodhanasya gadayā bhañktāsy ūrū mahāhave
iti pūrvaṃ pratijñātaṃ bhīmena hi sabhā-tale* (MBh.9.59.14)
(Kṛṣṇa reminds Balarāma of the vow that Bhīma formerly made)

« You know that it is the duty of a Kṣatriya to accomplish the vow he has taken. Formerly, Bhīma vowed in the midst of the assembly that he would in the great battle break (*bhañj-*) with his mace the thighs of Duryodhana » ¹⁹.

2. *bhavitā-*

*adyāham anṛṇas tasya kopasya bhavitā raṇe
amarsitāyāḥ kṛṣṇāyāḥ kāñkṣitasya ca me pituḥ* (MBh.7.39.7)
(Abhimanyu's address to Duḥśāsana)

« Today, I shall in battle disburden myself of that wrath (I had cherished for a long time against you). I shall also free myself of the debt I owe to the indignant Draupadī and my sire who has been looking for (the encounter with) you » ²⁰.

3. *chettāraḥ* (+ *ud-*) (plural, second person)

*yena yūyaṃ sudurvṛttā nṛśaṃsā jāta-manyavaḥ
ucchetāraḥ kulam kṛtsnam ṛte rāma-janārdanau* (MBh.16.2.9)
(Sages' curse upon the Vṛṣṇy-andhakas)

« Since you acted very wrongly (against us), you, cruel and

18. It is not always easy to draw a sharp line of demarcation between oath (*śapatha*) and promise (*pratijñā*), because these two terms are used often synonymously, the former being a vow for one's self and the latter for the other. Equally difficult it is to distinguish sharply oath (*śapatha*) and curse (*śāpa*), for the Hindu oath is nothing but a curse upon oneself (*Selbstverfluchung*) (cf. HOPKINS [1932] p. 330 and LÜDERS [1959] pp. 656-658).

19. Though the verb-root itself alternates (*bhid-* instead of *bhañj-*), the simple future (*bhetsyā-*) is used in the same utterance of the revenge-oath.
ūrū bhetsyāmi te pāpa gadayā vajra-kalpayā (MBh.3.46.29ab).

ūrū bhetsyāmi te saṃkhye gadayeti suyodhanam (MBh.9.57.6cd).
Cf. also MBh.9.59.15 (*ūrū bhetsyati te bhīmo gadayeti*).

20. Cf. MBh.7.39.8 (*adya kauravya bhīmasya bravitāsmi anṛṇo yudhi*).
MBh.8.52.16 (*ye vai śaṇḍha-tilās tatra bhavitāro 'dya te tilāḥ*).
For *śaṇḍha-tila*, reference is to be made to MBh.2.68.8, 13-14 and 9.58.11.

puffed with haughtiness, will exterminate whole the family with the exception of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa ».

4. *draṣṭā-*

*nāhatvā taṃ nivartiṣye puriṃ dvāravatīṃ prati
saśālvaṃ saubha-nagaraṃ hatvā draṣṭāsmi vaḥ punaḥ
trisāmā hanyatām eṣā dundubhiḥ śatru-bhīṣaṇī* (MBh.3.21.9)
(Kṛṣṇa swears slaughter of Śālva)

« I shall never return to the city of Dvāravatī unless I have killed him. I shall see you again only after I have destroyed the Saubha city and Śālva. Beat the kettledrum with its three tunes, so that it may terrify the enemy »²¹.

5. *gantā-*

*dhārtarāṣṭrān raṇe hatvā miṣatām sarva-dhanvinām
śamaṃ gantāsmi nacirāt satyam etad bravīmi vaḥ*
(MBh.2.68.22)

(Bhīma's oath at the hārsh words of Duṣṣāsana)

« Only after I have killed the Dhrtarāṣṭra's sons in battle in full view of all the bowmen, shall I soon go to my peace. This I swear to you as the truth »²².

6. *grahītā- (+ prati-)*

*bhaviṣyati ca yā kā cid bhaikṣavat svayam udyatā
pratigrahītā tām asmi na bhareyaṃ ca yām aham*
(MBh.1.42.7)

(Jaratkāru's promise to his ancestors in distress)

« If ever I find a virgin, who would be prepared (to marry me) by her own accord, come to me as gratuitous alms, I shall

21. Cf. MBh.3.120.28 (*draṣṭāsmi bhūyaḥ sukhinaḥ sametān*).

MBh.3.252.20 (*tenādya satyena vaśīkṛtaṃ tvāṃ draṣṭāsmi pārthaiḥ
parikṣyamāṇam*).

MBh.7.53.37 (*tathāpi bāṇair nihataṃ śvo draṣṭāsi raṇe mayā*).

MBh.7.166.26 (*tasyānubandhaṃ sa draṣṭā dhṛṣṭadyumnaḥ sudā-
ruṇam*).

22. Cf. MBh.5.54.45 (*droṇa-drauṇi-kṛpāś caiva gantā pārtho yama-kṣayam*).

MBh.7.125.25 (*śāntiṃ labdhāsmi teṣāṃ vā raṇe gantā salokatām*).

MBh.9.55.22 (*adyāntam eṣāṃ duḥkḥānāṃ gantā bharata-sattama*).

MBh.10.3.24 (*gantāsmi padaviṃ rājñāḥ pituḥ cāpi mahādyuteḥ*).

In Damayanti's well known lament, *gantā* in the second person implies an action that would be possible (*katham utsṛjya gantāsi vaśyāṃ bhāryām anu-
vratām*: MBh.3.60.5).

certainly accept her as my wife, on condition that I need not support her ».

7. *hantā-*

*suyodhanam imaṃ pāpaṃ hantāsmi gadayā yudhi
śiraḥ pādena cāsyāham adhiṣṭhāsyāmi bhū-tale* (MBh.2.68.28)
(Bhīma's oath at the departure from the assembly-hall)

« I shall kill this Suyodhana with my club in the fight, and I shall push his head into earth with my foot »²³.

8. *hartā- (+ abhi-)*

*yadi viśati rasātalaṃ tad agryaṃ
viyad api deva-puraṃ diteḥ puraṃ vā
tad api śara-satair ahaṃ prabhāte
bhṛśam abhipatya ripoḥ śiro 'bhihartā* (MBh.7.51.39)

(Arjuna's revenge-oath against Jayadratha, who killed his son Abhimanyu)

« If he (Jayadratha) enters the abode of the nether region, or ascends to the firmament, or repairs to the celestials, or the realm of the Daityas, I shall certainly on the expiration of this night strike the head of my foe with hundreds of arrows ».

9. *kartā-*

*nideśād dharma-rājasya draupadyāḥ padavīm caran
nirdhārtarāṣṭrāṃ pṛthivīm kartāsmi nacirād iva*
(MBh.2.68.45)

23. Cf. MBh.2.68.26 (*ahaṃ duryodhanaṃ hantā karṇaṃ hantā dhananjayaḥ*).

MBh.2.68.32 (*bhīmasena niyogāt te hantāhaṃ karṇam āhave*).

MBh.2.68.33 (*karṇaṃ karṇānugāṃś caiva raṇe hantāsmi patribhiḥ*).

MBh.2.68.41 (*hantāsmi tarasā yuddhe tvāṃ vikramya sabān-dhavam*).

MBh.3.268.15 (*hantāsmi tvāṃ sahāmātyaṃ yudhyasva paruṣo bhava*).

MBh.5.73.13 (*hantāhaṃ gadayābhyetya duryodhanam amarṣaṇam*).

MBh.7.51.20-22 (*śvo 'smi hantā jayadratham*).

MBh.7.166.28 (*dhr̥ṣṭadyumnaṃ ca samare hantāhaṃ pāpakāri-ṇam*).

MBh.8.52.18 (*hantāhaṃ pāṇḍavān sarvān saputrān iti yo 'bravīt taṃ adya karṇaṃ hantāsmi miśatāṃ sarva-dhanvinām*).

MBh.10.4.4 (*āvābhyāṃ sahitaḥ śatrūṃ śvo 'si hantā samāgame*).

(Nakula's revenge-oath at the departure from the assembly-hall)

« At the King Dharma's (= Yudhiṣṭhira's) command and walking in the foot-steps of Draupadī, I shall soon make the earth devoid of all Dhārtarāṣṭras »²⁴.

10. *labdhā-*

*nihatya tān raṇe sarvān pāñcālān pāṇḍavaiḥ saha
śāntiṃ labdhāsmi teṣāṃ vā raṇe gantā solokatām*
(MBh.7.125.25)

(Duryodhana's revenge-oath at the death of Jayadratha)

« (I swear by my good deeds, my prowess and by my sons that) only after having slain all the Pāñcalas with the Pāṇḍavas shall I obtain peace of mind, or, slain by them in battle-field, repair to those regions whither those allies of mine have gone »²⁵.

11. *netā-*

*ye cānye pratiyotsyanti buddhi-mohena māṃ nṛpāḥ
tāṃś ca sarvān śitair bāṇair netāsmi yama-sādanam*
(MBh.2.68.34)

(Arjuna's revenge-oath at the departure from the assembly-hall)

« And whatever other kings will fight with me in their folly,

24. Cf. MBh.1.126.38 (*prabrūhi rāja-śārdūla kartā hy asmi tathā nṛpa*).
MBh.2.68.40 (*kartāhaṃ karmaṇas tasya kuru kāryāṇi sarvaśaḥ*).
MBh.3.268.16 (*arākṣasam imāṇi lokāṃ kartāsmi niśitaiḥ śaraiḥ* = R.6.31.56).

MBh.5.178.34 (*tatrāham api hatvā tvāṃ saucaṃ kartāsmi bhārgava*).
MBh.5.193.39 (*kartāsmi nigrāhaṃ tasyety uvāca sa punaḥ punaḥ*).
MBh.7.2.20 (*kartāsmi etat satpuruṣāryakarma tyaktvā prāṇān anuyāsyāmi bhīṣmaṃ*).

MBh.7.126.32 (*kartāsmi samare karma dhārtarāṣṭra hitaṃ tava*).
MBh.8.28.26 (*kartāsmi miśatāṃ vo 'dya tato drakṣyatha me bāṇam*).
MBh.10.4.13 (*tataḥ kartāsi śatṛūṇāṃ yudhyatāṃ kadanaṃ mahat*).
MBh.15.13.3 (*kartāsmi etan mahīpāla nirvrto bhava bhārata*).

25. Cf. MBh.3.12.35 (*śāntiṃ labdhāsmi paramāṇi hatvā rākṣasa-kaṇṭakam*).
MBh.7.166.29 (*pāñcālānāṃ vadhaṃ kṛtvā śāntiṃ labdhāsmi kau-rava*).

MBh.10.3.28 (*nihatya caiva pāñcālān śāntim labdhāsmi sattama*).

I shall with my sharp arrows dispatch them all to Yama's abode » ²⁶.

12. *pātā-*

*vākya-śūrasya caivāsya paruṣasya durātmanaḥ
duḥśāsanasya rudhiraṃ pātāsmi mṛgarāḍ iva* (MBh.2.68.29)
(Bhīma's revenge-oath at the departure from the assembly-hall)
« Of this hero-in-words-alone, this harsh-speaking and evil-minded Duḥśāsana, I shall drink the blood like a lion ».

13. *pātayitā-*

*sūryodaye yukta-senaḥ pratīkṣya
dhvajī rathī rakṣa ca satyasamdhama
ahaṃ hi vaḥ paśyatāṃ dvīpam enaṃ
rathād bhīṣmaṃ pātayitāsmi bāṇaiḥ* (MBh.5.160.13)
(Arjuna's address to Duryodhana, vowing the slaughter of Bhīṣma)

« At sun-rise (tomorrow), furnished with army, banner and car, protect watchfully Bhīṣma, your refuge, who is firm in his promise, for I shall throw him down from his chariot with my arrows in full view of you all ».

14. *śayitā-*

*ahaṃ tu tān kuru-vṛṣabhān ajihmagaiḥ
praverayan yamasadanam raṇe caran
yaśaḥ paraṃ jagati vibhāvya vartitā
parair hato vudhi śayitātha vā punaḥ* (MBh.7.2.15)
(Karna's revenge-oath on the fall of Bhīṣma)

« Coursing on the battle-field, I shall despatch those bulls of Kuru's race (Pāṇḍavas) to Yama's abode by means of my straight shafts. Regarding fame as the highest object in the world, I shall conduct myself (as a honourable Kṣatriya, despatching them to Yama's abode), or slain by the foes (in the battle) shall I sleep on the battle-field ».

15. *śāsītā-*

sadyaś cograṃ adharmasya phalaṃ prāpnuhi durmate

26. Note the use of the simple future in the similar context: *neṣyāmi yama-sādanam* (MBh.2.68.18) and *darśayiṣyāmi bhūyiṣṭham ahaṃ vaivasvata-kṣayam* (MBh.2.68.44).

śāsītāsmi adya te bāṇaiḥ sarva-sainyasya paśyataḥ
(MBh.7.39.6)

(Abhimanyu's vow to Duḥśāsana)

« O you of wicked thought, obtain forthwith the frightful fruit of wickedness. I shall today chastise you with my arrows in the full view of the whole army ».

16. *smārayitā-*

yathā tudasi marmāṇi vāk-śarair iha no bhṛṣam
tathā smārayitā te 'haṃ kṛntan marmāṇi saṃyuge
(MBh.2.68.17)

(Bhīma's revenge-oath upon the harsh words of Duḥśāsana)

« Just as you sorely strike at our weak points with the arrows of words, just so I shall make you remember (them), when I strike yours in battle ».

17. *śramitā- (+ vi-)*

aḥaṃ tu kadanam kṛtvā śatrūṇām adya sauptike
tato viśramitā caiva svaptā ca vigata-jvaraḥ (MBh.10.4.33)
(Aśvatthāman's vow to perform the night-slaughter)

« Having caused tonight a slaughter of my enemies during their sleep, I shall then take rest and sleep with no anxiety ».

18. *svaptā-*

See above 17 (MBh.10.4.33)

19. *vartitā-*

See above 14 (MBh.7.2.15)

20. *veṣṭā (+ pra-)* (singular, third person)

adyāsya śatadhā dehaṃ bhinadmi gadayānaya
nāyaṃ praveṣṭā nagaram punar vāraṇasāhvayam
(MBh.9.55.19)

(Bhīma's determination as addressed to Yudhiṣṭhira)

« I shall today break his body into a hundred pieces with this mace (of mine). He (Duryodhana) will never enter again the city called after the elephant (Hastināpura) » ²⁷.

27. One may compare this with the verse in Buddhacarita (5.84):
janana-maraṇayor adṛṣṭa-pāro na puram ahaṃ kapilāhvayam praveṣṭā.
However, we have the use of simple future in the revenge-oath made by Draupadī, where the agent is given in the third person plural:
evam kṛtodakā nāryaḥ pravekṣyanti gajāhvayam (MBh.2.71.20).

21. *veṣṭā*- (+ *saṃpra*-)

*yady asminn ahate pāpe sūryo 'stam upayāsyati
ihaiva saṃpraveṣṭāhaṃ jvalitaṃ jātavedasam* (MBh.7.51.37cf)
(Arjuna's vow to kill Jayadratha on the fall of Abhimanyu)
« If the sun set without him, the wretch, being killed (by me),
then in this very place shall I enter the blazing fire ».

A few remarks may be made on those examples.

First, we note that such verb-forms as *gantā*-, *hantā*-, *kartā*-, *draṣṭā*-, and *bhavitā*- appear most frequently. Among these, the frequent occurrence of *hantā*- is understandable, because the contexts themselves are those of war and revenge. The same can also be said in the case of the verbs of destruction (*bhañj*-, *pātaya*-, and *chid*-) and relief (*śi*-, *svap*-, and *sāntiṃ labh*-). But apart from these, the verbs used in the oath-passages are unremarkably of common roots (*kr*-, *bhū*-, *gam*-, *nī*-, *drś*-, *grah*-, *hṛ*-, *viś*- and *pā*-). It should be noted, then, that the highly technical and complicated verb-roots of rare occurrence are apparently avoided in the emotional and emphatic revenge-oath, while simple and common verb-roots are often employed.

Second, as is expected in oath-passages, the agent in most of the cases cited above is the first person singular, accompanied often by an agent-indicator (*kartāham*, *hantāsmi*, etc.). Even in two exceptional cases (nos. 3 and 20), where the second person plural (*yūyam ... ucchetāraḥ*) and the third person singular (*nāyaṃ praveṣṭā*) appear, the strong will on the part of the speaker is evident²⁸. We could perhaps better classify these examples of second and third persons as agent of curse, rather than oaths.

Third, from the syntactical point of view, we note that there is an example in which the verb-form governs genitive instead of accusative (*kartāhaṃ karmanas tasya*: MBh.2.68.40). This is a remnant of the old *nomen agentis* (-*tār*-)²⁹, that is also retained in Pali³⁰.

As is remarked above the periphrastic future is often accompanied by a temporal adverb such as *śvaḥ*, *prātaḥ* and others.

28. Cf. KÖLVER (1982), p. 143 ff.

29. Cf. SPELZER (1886), p. 259 (§ 340, Remark 3).

30. Cf. HENDRIKSEN (1944), pp. 81-85 § 29.

This is also the case with the revenge-oath, in which the Epic hero sets the time-limit for the accomplishment of his revenge. We shall list below those adverbs of time³¹.

śvaḥ

satyaṃ vaḥ pratijānāmi śvo 'smi hantā jayadratham
(MBh.7.51.20ab)³²

prabhāte

*tathā prabhāte kartāsmi yathā kṛṣṇa suyodhanah
nānyaṃ dhanurdharaṃ loke maṃsyate mat-samaṃ yudhi*
(MBh.7.53.49)³³

nacirāt

śamaṃ gantāsmi nacirāt satyaṃ etad bravīmi vaḥ
(MBh.2.68.22cd)³⁴

bhūyaḥ

*dharme 'pramādaṃ kurutāprameyā
draṣṭāsmi bhūyaḥ sukhinaḥ sametān* (MBh.3.120.28cd)

punaḥ

śaśālvam saubha-nagaraṃ hatvā draṣṭāsmi vaḥ punaḥ
(MBh.3.21.9cd)³⁵

adya

*so 'ham adya yathā-kāmaṃ kṣatra-dharmam upāsya tam
gantāsmi padavīm rājñah pituś cāpi mahādyuteḥ*
(MBh.10.3.24)³⁶

The last example (*adya*) apparently contravenes the rule of the grammarians (*anadyatane luṭ*: Pāṇini 3.3.15), but the construction is not rare in the Epic³⁷.

31. The syntactical difference between simple future (*adya*) and periphrastic future (*śvaḥ*), which is best illustrated in the oft-quoted Vedic passage (*adyā varṣiṣyati...śvo vṛaṣṭā*: MS.2.1.8, DELBRÜCK [1888] p. 296, SPEIJER [1896] p. 55, RENOUE [1938] p. 127, KÖLVER [1982] p. 143), seems to be retained in the following Epic passage,

*idam adya kariṣyāmi śvaḥ kartāsmīti vādinam
kālo harati saṃprāpto nadi-vega ivoḍupam* (MBh.12.220.98).

32. Cf. MBh.3.171.16, 6.94.18, 7.51.21-22, 7.53.13, 7.53.37, 7.53.40, 7.57.10, 7.57.17, 9.28.91, 10.4.4, 12.220.98.

33. Cf. MBh.7.51.39.

34. Cf. MBh.2.68.45.

35. Cf. MBh.3.21.9, 7.2.15.

36. Cf. MBh.7.39.6-7. Cf. also GONDA (1957) p. 161 and KÖLVER (1982) p. 143.

37. Cf. SPEIJER (1886), p. 259, note 1.

Not only these temporal adverbs are used in the revenge-oath, but also some time-indicating phrases. Below are listed some examples in which time-limits (before sun-set, before sun-rise, etc.) are indicated.

anastaṃ-gata āditye

anastaṃ-gata āditye hantā saindhavam arjunaḥ
(MBh.7.95.10cd)

sūryo 'stam upayāsyati

imāṃ cāpy aparāṃ bhūyaḥ pratijñāṃ me nibodhata
yady asminn ahate pāpe sūryo 'stam upayāsyati
ihaiva sampraveṣṭāhaṃ jvalitaṃ jātavedasam (MBh.7.51.37)

sūryodaye

sūryodaye yukta-senaḥ pratikṣya
dhvajī rathī rakṣa ca satya-saṃdham
ahaṃ hi vaḥ paśyatāṃ dvīpam enaṃ
rathād bhiṣmaṃ pātayitāsmi bāṇaiḥ (MBh.5.160.13) ³⁸

Even such a « remote future » ³⁹ as « fourteen years from now » (*itaś caturdaśe varṣe*) can be construed with periphrastic future, although counter-examples can also be cited ⁴⁰.

naiva vācā vyavasitaṃ bhīma vijñāyate satāṃ
itaś caturdaśe varṣe draṣṭāro yad bhaviṣyati (MBh.2.68.30)

However, the examples quoted above do not exclude the possibility for forms other than the periphrastic future to be construed with time-indicative phrases. Counter-examples can be equally quoted, in which simple future (*sameṣyāmi*, *pāsyāmi*,

38. Though not an oath in the strict sense of the term, a similar phrase appears in Kṛpa's promise to Aśvatthāman.

tvaṃ punaḥ sūrya-saṃkāśaḥ śvobhūta udite ravau
prakāśe sarva-bhūtānāṃ vijetā yudhi sātravān (MBh.10.5.14).

39. Cf. SPEIJER (1886), p. 259 § 341.

40. Cf. for example,

yat-kṛte 'ham imāṃ prāptā teṣāṃ varṣe caturdaśe
hata-patyō hata-sutā hata-bandhu-jana-priyāḥ (19)
bandhu-śoṇita-digdhāṅgyo mukta-keśyo rajasvalāḥ
evaṃ kṛtodakā nāryaḥ pravekṣyanti gajābhayaṃ (MBh.2.71.20).
itaś caturdaśe varṣe vinaṅkṣyatiha kauravāḥ (MBh.2.71.30ab).
itaś caturdaśe varṣe mahat prāpsyatha vaiśasam (MBh.2.71.44cd).

nihanīṣyāmi, drakṣyase), optative (*hanyām, hanyāt, brūyām*), and even present indicative (*nīhanmī*) are accompanied with temporal adverbs and time-indicating phrases.

anastam-ita āditye

kaccit tīrṇa-pratijñam hi vāsudevena rakṣitam

anastam-ita āditye sameṣyāmy aham arjunam (MBh.7.103.43)

anastam-gata āditye

katham jīvati durdharse tvayi rādheya phalgunah

anastam-gata āditye hanyāt saindhavakam nṛpam

(MBh.7.120.18)

ravir astam iyād

rākṣase jīvamāne 'dya ravir astam iyād yadi

nāham brūyām punar jātu kṣatriyo 'smīti bhārata

(MBh.3.154.26)

ādityaḥ prātar abhyudaiṣyati

taṃ cej jīvantam ādityaḥ prātar abhyudaiṣyati

viṣam ālodya pāsyāmi mā kīcaka-vaśam gamam

śreyo hi maraṇam mahyam bhīmasena tavāgrataḥ

(MBh.4.20.33)

anatītām imām rātrim

śape sātvaṭa putrābhyām iṣṭena sukṛtena ca

anatītām imām rātrim yadi tvām vīra-māninam (6)

arakṣyamāṇam pāṛthena jīṣṇunā sasutānujam

na hanyām niraye ghore pateyam vṛṣṇi-pāṃsana (MBh.7.131.7)

prabhātāyām rajanyām

te vayam pariviśrāntā vinidrā vigata-jvarāḥ

prabhātāyām rajanyām vai nihanīṣyāma sātravān (MBh.10.4.9)

imām rajanīm vyuṣṭām

mā sma yajña-kṛtām prītiṃ prāpnuyām saj-janocitām

yadīmām rajanīm vyuṣṭām na nīhanmī parān raṇe

(MBh.9.29.20)

acirāt

satyam te pratijānāmi kṛṣṇe bāṣpo nigrhyatām

hatāmitrāṇ śriyā yuktān acirād drakṣyase patīn (MBh.5.80.49)

adya

iṣṭāpūrtena dānena satyena ca japena ca

śape rājan yathā hy adya nihanīṣyāmi somakān (MBh.9.29.19)

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